

## CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

- 1 1. A method for providing users associated with an organization access to documents  
2 that belong to a set of documents, comprising the steps of:  
3 storing hierarchy data that identifies  
4 a set of nodes that correspond to ORG-UNITS associated with the  
5 organization; and  
6 hierarchical relationships between said nodes that reflect hierarchical  
7 relationships between the ORG-UNITS that correspond to said nodes;  
8 establishing a first mapping between the users and the set of nodes based on the  
9 ORG-UNITS to which the users belong;  
10 establishing a second mapping between the documents in said set of documents and  
11 the set of nodes; and  
12 determining which documents in said set of documents a user is allowed to access  
13 based on the hierarchy data, the first mapping and the second mapping.
- 1 2. The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of determining includes  
2 determining that the user may access only a subset of documents in said  
3 set of documents, wherein said subset includes only documents that  
4 either:  
5 map to a node to which the user maps; or  
6 map to a node that, according to said hierarchical relationships, resides below a node  
7 to which the user maps.



- 1    10.    The method of Claim 1 wherein the step of determining which documents said user is  
2            allowed to access is performed in response to a request received by a web server over  
3            a network from a browser on a client being used by said user.
- 1    11.    The method of Claim 1 further comprising the steps of:  
2            storing said set of documents in a repository accessible to said server; and  
3            providing from said repository to said user over said network one or more documents  
4            that said user is allowed to access.
- 1    12.    The method of Claim 11 further comprising the step of implementing said repository  
2            in a relational database system.
- 1    13.    A computer-readable medium carrying instructions for providing users associated  
2            with an organization access to documents that belong to a set of documents, the  
3            instructions including instructions for performing the steps of:  
4            storing hierarchy data that identifies  
5                    a set of nodes that correspond to ORG-UNITS associated with the  
6                    organization; and  
7                    hierarchical relationships between said nodes that reflect hierarchical  
8                    relationships between the ORG-UNITS that correspond to said nodes;  
9            establishing a first mapping between the users and the set of nodes based on the  
10            ORG-UNITS to which the users belong;  
11            establishing a second mapping between the documents in said set of documents and  
12            the set of nodes; and  
13            determining which documents in said set of documents a user is allowed to access  
14            based on the hierarchy data, the first mapping and the second mapping.

- 1 14. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13 wherein the step of  
2 determining includes determining that the user may access only a subset  
3 of documents in said set of documents, wherein said subset includes  
4 only documents that either:  
5 map to a node to which the user maps; or  
6 map to a node that, according to said hierarchical relationships, resides below a node  
7 to which the user maps.
- 1 15. The computer-readable medium of Claim 14 further comprising instructions for  
2 performing the step of allowing the user to access the subset of documents without  
3 conveying to said user any information about documents in said set of documents that  
4 are not in said subset.
- 1 16. The computer-readable medium of Claim 13 further comprising instructions for  
2 performing the step of automatically synchronizing the hierarchy data based on a  
3 new set of hierarchy information.
- 1 17. The computer-readable medium of Claim 16 wherein the step of automatically  
2 synchronizing includes the steps of:  
3 inserting nodes that appear in the new set of hierarchy information but not in the  
4 hierarchy data into the hierarchy data;  
5 moving nodes that have new positions in the new set of hierarchy information to new  
6 positions in the hierarchy data; and  
7 deleting nodes that appear in the hierarchy data but not in the new set of hierarchy  
8 information.

